



## THE CUSTOMS LIST

The smooth passage of your material and equipment from one country to another is as vital to the good management of a tour as is the smooth passage of your personnel. Rapid customs clearance is essential if you want to avoid costly delays and keep your fingernails. It all starts with the preparation of a customs list (see p. 32).

Requiring the same accuracy and attention to detail as your visa list, the list of your material must be prepared in a standard manner if it is to be accepted everywhere you intend to go.

Remember that this list will be used by the customs officials clearing your material, by the transporters who will carry it and by your presenter who will be awaiting its arrival. The list must, therefore, contain sufficient information for all these purposes.

The first thing to know is that the list must start with the crates, boxes, cases, or whatever, that are going to contain your goods. You must assign a number to each container. Large organizations, travelling with a large amount of material, will find it helpful to have different coloured containers for different kinds of goods (e.g. red for electrics, green for wardrobe, blue for sound, and so on).

The total number of containers, "*the piece count*", is both a vital verification of the material you hand over to your transporter and of the material they deliver back to you at the end of a shipment. Customs officers

will often use the piece count as a basic means of judging the accuracy of your list.

The list must contain the following information:

1. The number of each container.
2. A description of the physical appearance of each container (e.g. red wooden crate on castors; blue fibre box; green canvas sack, etc.).
3. A list of the contents of each container. An accurate, but succinct description will suffice (e.g. 6 prop. metal swords; 2 prop. brass lanterns; 1 prop. papier-maché shield, etc.). A generic description like "Props" is not sufficient.
4. The width of the container.
5. The height of the container.
6. The depth of the container.
7. The cubic volume of the material.
8. The weight of the container and its contents.
9. The value of the goods for insurance purposes. Here, you should be as reasonable as possible. Remember that whereas a valuable musical instrument should be declared for its full value, a backcloth that you have had for several years should be declared for a sum that takes its wear and tear into consideration. The value that you attach to your own goods will probably be accepted without question by your insurance company, or if you "bond" the goods for temporary export